

## **Department of Planning and Budget 2008 Fiscal Impact Statement**

**1. Bill Number:** HB 1530

<b>House of Origin</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
<b>Second House</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

**2. Patron:** Nixon

**3. Committee:** Courts of Justice

**4. Title:** **Foster Care; Group Placement of Siblings and Visitation**

**5. Summary:** This bill requires reasonable steps to be taken to place siblings in foster care in the same foster home unless such placement is determined contrary to the best interests of the child or the special needs of a child requires separate placement. It also requires that for siblings placed in separate foster homes, the local department, child-placing agency, or public agency shall develop a plan to ensure frequent and regular visitation and communication between siblings and it stipulates the items to be addressed in the visitation plan.

**6. No Fiscal Impact**

**7. Budget Amendment Necessary:** No

**8. Fiscal Implications:** Current foster care policy recommends placing siblings together or, if that is not possible because of the limited number of foster care homes, the local agency must arrange for regular visitation among the siblings. The local worker is also responsible for preparing a foster care plan for every child in foster care which includes facilitating and planning sibling visits and documenting the frequency and location of the visits in the foster care plan. Assuming the visitation plan addressed in this legislation could be integrated into the current foster care plan, there would not be a substantial increase in workload because the issue of visitation is already being addressed.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:**

Local departments of social services  
Courts

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

**11. Other Comments:** There is the potential for a fiscal impact if the social worker has to assume responsibility for transporting the child for visits. However, the department has no way to determine how many more children would need visitation or how much time would be needed to bring these children for visitation with their siblings.

**Date:** 2/4/2008

**Document:** G:\2008 Fiscal Year\HB1530.Doc